



# Self-Confidence as a Predictor of First-Term Attrition

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*Achieving Human Resource Solutions Through Innovative Research*

# 1st Watch Project Objective

**Understand what affects  
Sailors  
across full-term of  
enlistment**

**Comprehensive  
Questionnaire**

**+**

**Unique  
Measures**

**+**

**Longitudinal  
Design**

- **Identify recruits/Sailors at risk**
- **Identify intervention points**
- **Provide tools for**
- **Better quality Sailors**
- **Better prepared Sailors**

# Background

**NPRST**

- **1<sup>st</sup> Watch project utilizes unique measures to determine predictors of first-term retention v. attrition from the Navy**
  - Stress coping adaptability and social support have been determined as significant predictors**
  - Additional constructs under examination**
- **Self-confidence**
  - One component of higher-order self-esteem construct (Owens, 1993)**
  - Conceptualized as “one’s belief in meeting the challenge of the task to be performed”; hypothesized to be positively related to performance (Woodman & Hardy, 2003)**
  - Examined in relation to first-term attrition from the U.S. Navy**

# Method

- **Instrumentation**

**New Sailor Survey ( $N = 38,656$ )**

- › **Administered to recruits upon arrival at Recruit Training Center (RTC)**

**Enlisted Master File (EMF)**

- › **Contains information regarding individual disposition (retention v. attrition from the Navy)**

- **Sample**

**$N = 32,339$  matched cases**



- **Factor analysis**

**14 items hypothesized to comprise self-confidence scale**

- **Reliability analysis**

**Determination of cohesion of items**

- **Logistic regression analysis**

**Determination of predictive ability of self-confidence construct**

## Results

- **Items factor into one distinct factor ( $\lambda = 6.965$ , 50% variance explained)**
- **High scale reliability ( $\alpha = .92$ )**
- **Self-confidence found to be a significant predictor of retention v. attrition from the Navy during the first term of enlistment**

**Higher levels of self-confidence associated with decreased likelihood of attrition during the first term of enlistment ( $B = -0.083$ ,  $p < .05$ )**

# Discussion

NPRST

- **Hypothesized self-confidence construct effectively measured and found to predict first-term retention v. attrition**
- **Supports previous research positively relating self-confidence to performance (Hardy, 2003)**
- **Implications for training**
  - Self-confidence can be fostered throughout recruiting and training processes
  - › **Modeling and verbal coaching by recruiters, RDCs, instructors, and fellow recruits**



## **Future research**

- **Design and implement programs targeted toward developing self-confidence**

**Coach individuals with lower levels of self-confidence**

- **Examine alternate facet of self-esteem**

**Self-deprecation: negative evaluations of the self; viewing the self as “inept, ineffectual, or unsuccessful” (Owens, 1993)**

**Develop strategies to reduce self-deprecation during recruiting and training processes**